McGill Daily **Culture**

volume 86 • number 55

February 20 — March 5, 1997

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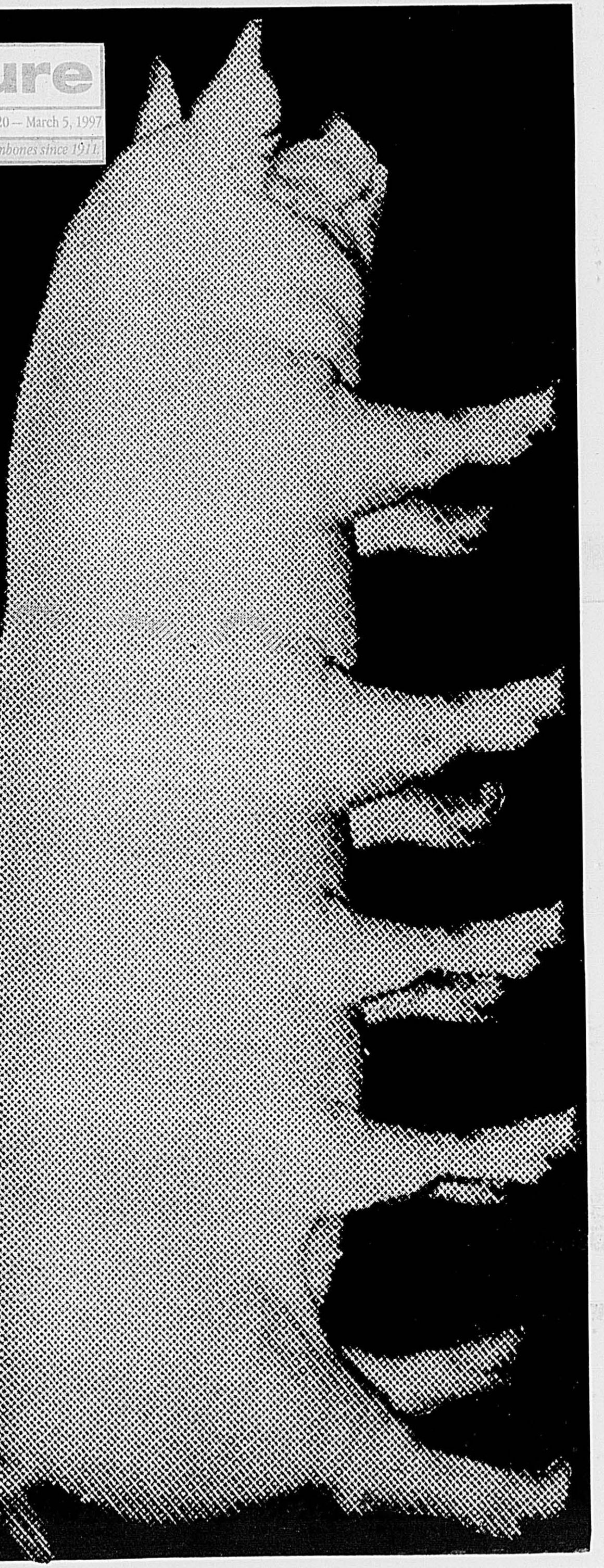


Insides:

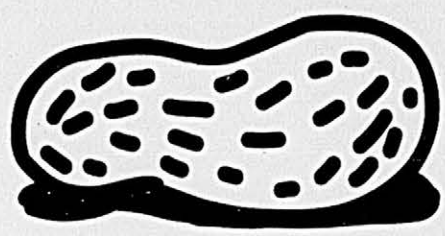
Demystifying breast cancer

Reset

Simone de Beauvoir Institute

Signing to music

Why work for peanuts when you can sell them?



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THE DAILY

SINCE 1911

Pen Sketches for Daily Publications Society Board of Directors Candidates

James Campbell, Arts

Having already served on the Board of Directors for this past year, I feel I have the experience and know how to serve as your representative on the Board. I am deeply familiar with the ins and outs of the Board, the constitution and the general operation of the Daily. I feel that the Daily is an important student voice on campus, and provides an imperative forum for debates on issues that effect us all. As your representative on the Board I will work to ensure that the Daily remains an open and inclusive forum for all students.

Matthew Watkins, Arts

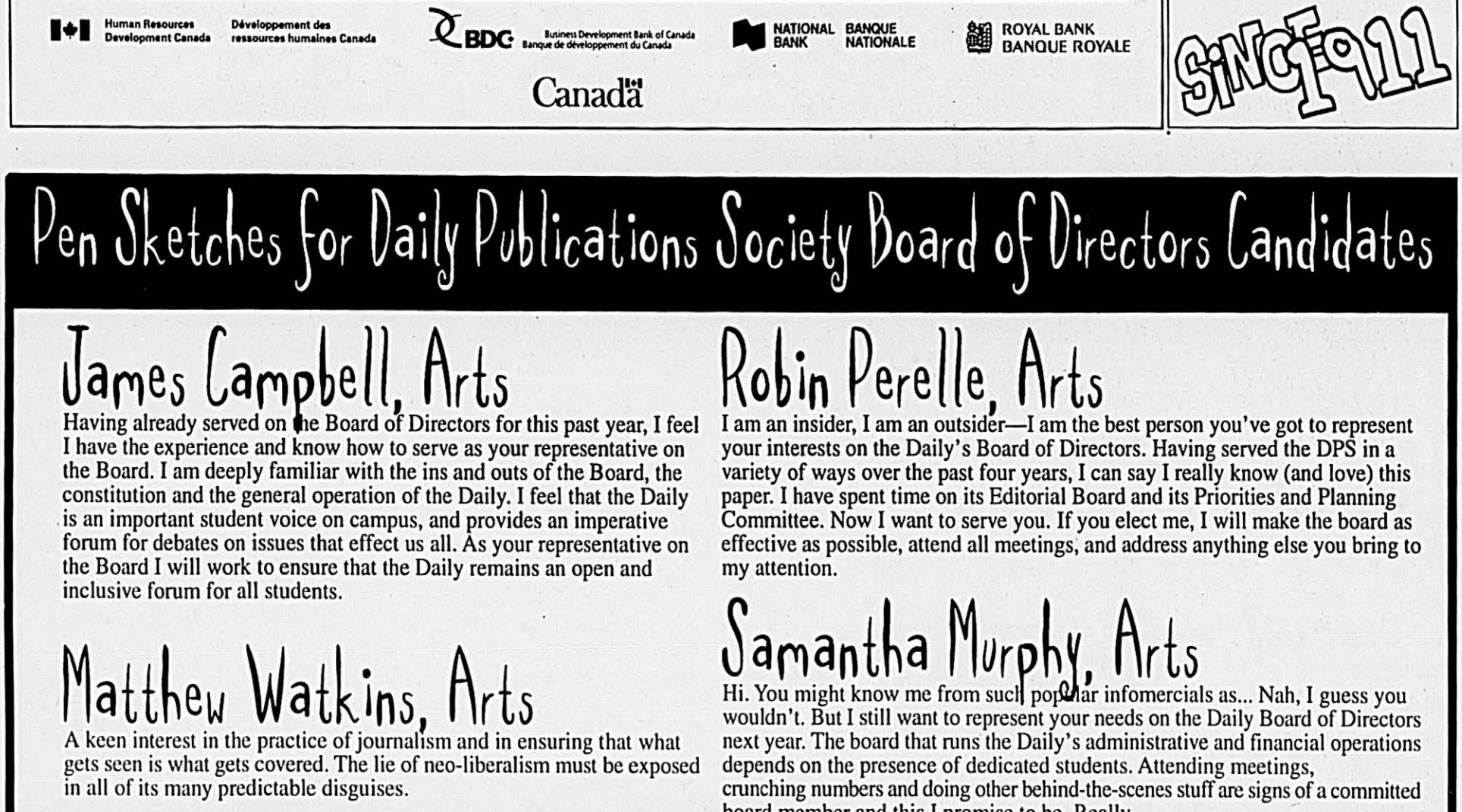
A keen interest in the practice of journalism and in ensuring that what gets seen is what gets covered. The lie of neo-liberalism must be exposed in all of its many predictable disguises.

Robin Perelle, Arts

I am an insider, I am an outsider—I am the best person you've got to represent your interests on the Daily's Board of Directors. Having served the DPS in a variety of ways over the past four years, I can say I really know (and love) this paper. I have spent time on its Editorial Board and its Priorities and Planning Committee. Now I want to serve you. If you elect me, I will make the board as effective as possible, attend all meetings, and address anything else you bring to my attention.

Samantha Murphy, Arts

Hi. You might know me from such popular infomercials as... Nah, I guess you wouldn't. But I still want to represent your needs on the Daily Board of Directors next year. The board that runs the Daily's administrative and financial operations depends on the presence of dedicated students. Attending meetings, crunching numbers and doing other behind-the-scenes stuff are signs of a committed board member and this I promise to be. Really.



Simon de Beauvoir under fire

North America's first women's studies centre recommended for closure

by Keri Kosuri

Despite its renowned reputation, Concordia's Simone de Beauvoir Institute, the first institute in North America dedicated to women's studies, was recommended for closure earlier this year. This recommendation was made on the basis that the Institute has failed to raise substantial revenue for the university.

In a proposal titled "Our Immediate Future", Dr. Jack Lightstone, Concordia's provost vice rector, announced that the "Simone de Beauvoir Institute should be closed, the Women's Studies program and faculty transferred to another department, and the para-educational activities of the Institute carried on by a unit such as the Women's Centre."

Lightstone contends that "the university must ask of each of the colleges whether it has fulfilled its mandate as whether students of high quality come to Concordia who would not otherwise do so."

In other words, Lightstone attempts to reason that, when education cutbacks are necessary, only those colleges that attract 'outstanding students' should remain. However, since Lightstone does not provide concrete evidence to support his claims and generalizations, such a statement conveys a profound sense of sexism and dismissiveness. Lightstone implies that an interdisciplanary education encompassing women's studies is not only unecessary, but incapable of being an asset to the academic community.

Institute decries cuts

The document recommending the closure of the Institute has been pending since August of this year, yet it was only in early February that the students and faculty of the Institute were notified of its existence. This is indicative of a very male dominated hierarchy within the university that shows a complete disrespect for the work of or rights of women.

"When we first heard the recommendation," says Kaarina Kailo, interim principal of the Simone de Beauvoir Institute,"we were taken back on many levels. We weren't consulted. It was the non-participatory process that first upset everybody. The way it was handled was very insulting to us as women. It helped mobilize a lot of anger."

Kailo also argues that the transfer of the women's studies program to the women's centre, currently a social activities group, would be unable to meet the Institute's research needs.

The document cites a broad range of cuts to be made to Concordia's entire arts faculty, and although education cuts in Québec have escalated, Kailo argues that the reasoning Lightstone uses to close down the institution is invalid. "We are viable both economically and in terms of Concordia's mission statement that stresses tolerance of difference, and our universal function as social critics, and promoting multi-culturalism in Québec." says Kailo.

Specifically, the Simone de Beauvoir Institute fosters diversity and tolerance within the Montréal community, not only because it unites women from every background, but because it unifies teaching and research programs.

Founded in 1978 and named after the prominent French writer, feminist and philosopher, the Simone De Beauvoir Institute strives "to serve the university and the larger community through research, teaching, and community participation." The university has fulfilled this mission statement by addressing issues extending beyond the sphere of women studies. This year, they hosted a range of events including a Black History month celebration, a Native artist and writer lecture series, and a number of visiting scholars in the past, such as Gloria Steinem, Nicole Brossard, and Manon Dumas. The Institute also collaborates with a number of organizations, including the Armenian Educational and Cultural Society, Canadian Friends of Finland, and the Storyteller's Guild.

"The recommendation to close down the Institute says Kailo," is a backlash against all diversity. It's not just women that are under fire."

Consequences and action

If closed, not only will Montréal lose a valuable community outreach, but also a great disseminator of knowledge. Since the 1980's, members of the institute have produced a large number of publications that are distributed to over 40 different organizations across North America.

Since 1992, the Simone de Beauvoir Institute has brought Concordia $1.8 million in research grants. Marie Dixon of the Women's Studies Association says, "There are a lot of facts showing that this is a cost efficient institute. This is a large part of the problem, all the recommendations he [Lightstone] gave [used] very superficial reasoning. If he had looked at the facts, he would see that the Institute is very cost efficient."

In any case, Lightstone's claim that the institute is not economically viable entails cutbacks that will have consequences for the faculty and staff. The issue of what will happen to part-time faculty members once their positions are lost has not even been broached yet. Full-time faculty members are tenured and so positions will be found for them.

"This is another problem with the document," says Marie. "If you're going to close it down, you have to figure out everything and find the proper alternatives."

Members of the Institute have created a letter-writing campaign directed at four key administrators, documenting facts pointing to the cost efficiency of the Institute.

Although no demonstrations have taken place yet, students have been organized to protest if the decision to close down the Institute is finalized. Says Dixon, "We want to be careful because it can be detrimental, but we are ready to launch into action."

The closure of a renowned Institute represents an attack on the 51 per cent of Concordia's population who are women, as well as those ethnic groups and organizations that find Simone de Beauvoir Institute a place to voice their concerns.

Says Kailo, "This could set a very dangerous precedent. . . as women we are a basic group and if we are slashed, anything goes after that. . . We [the Simone de Beauvoir Institute] help individuals build all different aspects of surviving in the world and we provide the critical tool of vision."

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letters

Low standards dilutes message

To the Daily,

This letter is in regards to the article written by Zachary Schwartz, "Fraternities, sororities gain McGill voice [Feb. 17]." I would like to clarify a comment the author attributed to me.

Mr. Schwartz quotes me as having said, "The only problem we have with fraternities is that rape happens in them. But that happens everywhere."

Let me state that I would never have strung together two completely contradictory statements. After my first sentence, Mr. Schwartz asked, "but doesn't rape happen everywhere?" I agreed, but then went on to explain why the environment at fraternities has been a particular concern.

Mr. Schwartz's poor attention to detail seriously discredited the point that I was trying to make. In the future, I urge you to demand a more accurate standard of your reporters.

P.S. The Inter-Fraternity Council was the Inter-Greek Letter Council's *predecessor*, not its *successor*.

Barbara Timmins,
External Co-ordinator, Sexual Assault Centre of McGill Students' Society

The McGill Daily *Culture*

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Political Reset

Montréal punk finds a younger voice

by Mike Cullen

Just about every student dreams of leaving behind the shackles of school and going to forming a band, but few ever do. So being in a band in first year CEGEP and already playing political music is uncommon. This is what makes the Montréal local punk group Reset a bit of an anomaly among aspiring guitar bashers.

"I was interested in world issues when I was eight," says Charles, the band's drummer. "It's important that young people get involved," he continues over the phone. "Right now kids just don't give a shit. We just want to revitalize their militance."

While militancy has always been the credo of punk since its inception, the level of activism displayed in the band's music is startling considering that none of its members are older than 18.

Formed close to three years ago, Reset has generated a surprisingly loud buzz around town lately. This momentum has translated into their being named "Band of the future" by Montréal alternative weekly The Hour. Most people might also remember a picture of Reset's young faces alongside members of the band Offspring published this past summer.

But Reset doesn't aim to be like them or any other punk band for that matter — by far the mildest of their ideals. They choose to be outspoken about the beliefs normally espoused by more prolific and politically active bands like Rage Against the Machine.

"It's not about one issue, about one cause," says Charles as he names off issues such as racism and Native American genocide which Reset deals with in their music. "We're not dogmatic; [it's just that] a lot of kids don't have a chance to learn about this stuff or it's not packaged so that's it's attractive to them."

Their awareness of social justice problems doesn't mean that Reset isn't sensitive to other issues, however. The band also has more conventional ideas about the music scene in Montréal.

"We don't believe music should be restricted to any particular age group," Charles admits.

Clearly the early beginnings of the band might have something to do with it, since they started playing gigs when the members were merely 15. Of course, venue owners have always been edgy about underagers in their establishments — a fact that will always constrain the accessibility of live music for teens.

Making music accessible is also the reason why the predominantly French-speaking quartet have chosen to write songs in English.

"It's made to be international," says Charles, "French is a beautiful language, but it's [better] for writing. I'm not sure it fits the music as well — it sounds funny."

But Charles didn't mean that to be a political comment in this case, it's a simple pragmatic matter of reaching the most people possible. He points out that most French-speaking youths in Québec listen to lots of English music anyway so it was an easy choice to make.

Music-wise, Reset has chosen to follow what they see as a technical style of punk. The average music listener probably isn't aware of the multiple gradations of punk and may be only familiar with its usual association; that punk equals sloppy music.

Jazz pattern drums beats accelerated to punk speed and multiple voices are some things that the band is incorporating into their repertoire. A laudable goal for sure, but they might have a hard time overcoming the image set by their Billie-Joe (Green Day)-esque sounding lead vocalist. Charles claims that they've never heard that comment before, but it's probably one they're bound to hear more often once they begin their Canadian tour this May.

When talking to Charles about Reset's aspirations as a band we begin to see that they are not an exception to all typical band marketing obligations. Charles chimes in insistently to include a mention of their record label, 2112. Their signing with 2112/Cargo helped them to secure financing for their just-released first CD — a monetary reality that even the staunchest political band must accept as a cost for getting their message out.

"We want people to know that there are people imprisoned around the world for their beliefs," says Charles in his response to my question about what the one thing they want people to know. "And free speech doesn't really exist. It's just something politicians use," he adds.

But this answer is only forthcoming after a moments' pause; Charles admits that he needs to think about it for a second and talk to his band mates. Soon I hear an answer from the lead singer Pierre: "We're available." Charles rebuts him without a hint of irony; "Something serious 'cause we're a serious band."

Reset launches its CD, *No Worries* with bands Men 'O' Steel, X-Large and My Big Wheel, tomorrow (Friday, February 21), at the Spectrum (318 Ste. Catherine). The show is all ages, and tickets $8.78 plus taxes. Call 285-2423 for info.

Events

Friday, February 21

• **Catholic Community Services Inc.** is searching for volunteers to help staff provide programs and services to seniors, families, parents & children, singles and youth, 1857 de Maisonneuve Blvd West (Metro Guy) 10h. Info: 937-5351.

• Seminar series "**Experiences in International Public Health**" continues with speaker Dr. Margie Mendell from Concordia University, Karl Polanyi Institute of Political Economy (1020 Pine Ave.), room 24, 8h30.

Saturday, February 22

• Sunshine Concert Evening Fundraiser for the **South Shore Saints Barbershop Chorus & Champlain College Student Association**, 19h, Auditorium Champlain College (900 Riverside Drive), St. Lambert. Students $5/$7 at the door, Seniors $8/$10, Adult $10/$12.

Sunday, February 23

• Storytelling of "The Road from Slavery" at the **Yellow Door**, 19h30, 3625 Aylmer St. Admission: $3. Info: 398-6243.

Sunday, March 2

• **Lupus Discussion Group** at the Jewish Hospital of Hope (5725 Victoria Ave), 2nd floor, Conference room, 10h. Free admission.

Beyond

• Benefit for the **Kanehsatake Spiritual Gathering Committee**, Friday, March 7, 1997, 19h, 1395 René-Levesque Blvd West. Admission by donation. Info: 848-7443.

• **Dawson College** hosts a reunion to celebrate the grand opening of their new Athletics Complex. Alumni games, dinner/social, ceremonies, Saturday April 12. Info: John Davidson at 931-873, ext. 1205.

• **Southeast Asian Students' Association of McGill** presents "Pearls of Asia" culture show for the benefit of the Montreal's Children's Hospital Foundation, Saturday, March 8, 16h30, Shatner Ballroom. Tickets: non-members $15, members $12, Adults $20. Info: 682-7407.

Ongoing

• **Art Therapy Women's Group**, led by Deborah Herman, twice monthly, Saturdays 11h. $25 per session. Individual sessions available at reasonable rates. No experience in art required. Info: 482-1608.

• **Canadian Studies Graduate Students Association of McGill** Annual Conference with speaker Prof. Desmond Morton: "History as an Adult Entertainment," Feb 21-22, 3650 McTavish. Info: 5278-8631.

• **Erskine and American United Church** (3407 du Musée) presents a thrift shop/bazaar every Monday, 10h-16h. Info: 849-3286.

• **Literacy partners of Québec** can help you with your reading. Info: LEARN line at 931-7434. Also, volunteers for literacy tutor training, contact 931-8731, ext. 1413.

• **McGill School of Social Work** offers bereavement support groups free of charge to anyone who is experiencing any type of loss of a family member or friend. Info: Estelle Hopmeyer, 398-7067.

• **Red Herring**, McGill's humour magazine, needs to be funny. Meetings held every Tuesday at 17h30 in Shatner room 303. Info: 398-6825.

Pro-Laugh but not funny

Citizen Ruth comes to a theatre near you

by Mariko Tamaki

Ruth Stoops (Laura Dern), was just another one of your everyday glue sniffing n'er-do-wells until she got pregnant for the fourth time. Jailed for sniffing paint fumes, Ruth is charged with endangering the life of her unborn child. Ironically, shortly after sentencing, the judge offers her the following option: have an abortion and receive a reduced sentence.

The following scene is one of the more confusing — and that's saying a lot — of this film. Writhing on the floor of her cell, Ruth sobs over her predicament: having to choose between her fetus and her freedom. Having observed Ruth's incredibly self-destructive behavior up until this point (sniffing paint fumes is probably not the best activity as far as pre-natal care goes), it is hard to believe that the possibility of an abortion could produce such a reaction.

At this point the movie throws us an interesting twist when Ruth is joined in her cell by a choir of middle-aged female "Babysavers." Like vultures catching the scent of a fresh kill, the cooing Babysavers immediately descend on Citizen Ruth's forlorn protagonist. This, we will soon discover, is only the first move in what will become a bidding war between the powers of pro-life and pro-choice.

GLUE SNIFFING, ABORTION AND CHUCKLEHEADS — WHAT A MOVIE!

Director Alexandre Payne's method of handling the issue of abortion in *Citizen Ruth* is oddly democratic. Essentially the movie attempts to appear neutral by making both sides of the debate look equally ridiculous; non-partisan by means of slap-stick. This method gives rise to is a distinctive parallel between the two groups. The sides appear to be opposites but are actually strangely similar.

Both pro-life and pro-choice sides have little singing rituals: the Babysavers hold hands and sing hymns, the pro-choice lesbian couple has a little goddess/moon ditty. Both groups have leaders who arrive in large aircrafts to much fanfare. Finally, both groups, throughout the movie, demonstrate little interest in Ruth, and more interest in winning the 'war' over abortion.

The whole thing is a bizarre two-ring circus of outrageous personalities. Bert Reynolds puts in an appearance as the slimy gold chains and hair grease poobah of the Babysaving community. Swoozie Kurtz stars as the politically correct lesbian/double-agent who spends half the film as a Babysaver, the other half as a butt-kicking feminist.

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS CONCERNED ABOUT YOU AS A PERSON

My favorite part of the movie is when you see all the Babysavers arrive with their little plastic feti and fold-up lawn chairs. Wearing matching Babysaver sweatshirts that come in pink and blue, the Babysavers look like a ludicrous pastel army.

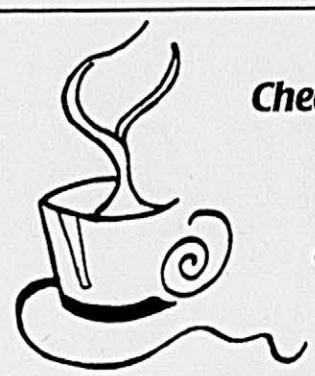
Laura Dern, as an actress and as a character, is somewhat awash in this film. As an actress she appears to waver between wanting to give Ruth some shred of dignity and wanting to play her up as a total nincompoop. As a character, Ruth is merely an innocent bystander to the war her pregnancy inspires. At one point in the movie, Ruth gasps, "I feel like I just won the lottery."

For all it's zaniness, *Citizen Ruth* is not exactly a funny movie. It is, no doubt, a lighter look at the age old debate over abortion, but it doesn't really pack a whole lot of jokes. One poster I saw at the theatre described the movie as being "Pro-Laugh." If this means the movie is oriented away from debate that the description fits, but if it is meant to imply that the movie is a laugh a minute then it is entirely misleading.

It is possible that the downfall of this movie is its non-partisan attitude. *Citizen Ruth* seems to depend a lot more on stereotypes (hippy lesbians, Harley Davidson war vets, right-wing bible thumpers), which makes for very predictable humor.

The result is that *Citizen Ruth* is much more interesting as a portrait than as a comedy. In some ways, the film's characters make the movie comparable to a Punch and Judy puppet show — funny but only in a very contrived way. Although I thought the idea behind this movie was an interesting one, *Citizen Ruth* disappointed in the end with its failure to provide anything more than an amusing and vibrant, yet clichéd portrait of the debate that continues to rage across North America.

Citizen Ruth is playing at Cineplex Centre-Ville.



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Humanizing B

Confronting ignor

by Faiza Mushtaq

Hema Dias Abeygunawardena, was first diagnosed with breast cancer in 1990, soon after immigrating to Canada from Sri Lanka. But a mixture of what she describes as fear, anger and self-pity led her into a phase of denial, where she convinced herself that breast cancer is only "a white women's disease." She says she was determined not to tell anyone or to seek medical care, and "just to wait 'till I fall dead of the disease."

Abeygunawardena was one of the guest speakers at a recent panel discussion organized by Breast Cancer Action Montréal (BCAM) on January 16. The session brought together four women from diverse cultural perspectives who are survivors breast cancer.

The women's testimony underscored the overwhelming inadequacy of current programs sponsored by the traditional medical establishment to recognize the experience of women from different cultural backgrounds, especially when it comes to breast health.

DEMYSTIFYING BREAST CANCER: (L-R) CRAWLEY, CARR, LAPOINTE, ABEYGUNAWARDENA

For the women, who have been working to bring about change in their own communities, this was an opportunity to exchange ideas and to identify common goals.

Frustrated by the lack of information available to women on breast cancer, the panel identified the need for increased communication as the primary objective for survivors and activists alike.

For Abeygunawardena it was only after she spent some time in the library looking up medical information that a decisive change in attitude came about. She became more willing to talk about her diagnosis and to seek treatment.

What made the acknowledgment especially difficult was the taboo status of the topic in her own community. There had been no prior discussion of anyone else having gone through the same suffering.

According to Abeygunawardena it is vitally important to have visible reminders that breast cancer is something that can be dealt with and that can be survived.

By speaking up and becoming involved with support and education groups, she has become a source of guidance for many South Asian women, and many more have been eager to approach her and talk about the whole experience. Opening up the channels of communication will lead, she hopes, to "more women taking the step to go out and get screenings and breast check-ups."

The "search for a cure" mentality had tended to dominate the discourse surrounding breast cancer in the past. Now, however, activists, are stressing the need for a more comprehensive approach to educate women.

Activists have become increasingly wary of the medical establishment's capacity to "discover" a cure for cancer while simultaneously ignoring preventative approaches to reducing the incidence of the disease.

the cure could be changing the way we live

In the past 30 years, the United States alone has funneled over $30 billion into the search for a "cure" for cancer. But as Pat Kelly, a survivor and activist from Burlington Breast Cancer Support Services in Ontario points out, "we're no closer to finding a cure than we were 30 years ago."

Recent evidence indicates a correlation between the increased use of chemicals found in some plastics, pesticides and bleached paper, and certain transformations in the endocrine system. These chemicals could very well be the cause of increased rates of breast and other cancers.

It is becoming more important than ever to reach women across Canada, given the fact that one out of every nine women gets diagnosed with breast cancer. That figure gets much higher for women above the age of 50. It was also noted that the incidence rate among younger women has recently shown an alarming upward swing.

Incidences of breast cancer have increased annually from the 1.2 per cent growth seen between 1940 and 1982 to approximately four per cent between 1982 and 1987.

In March, 1995, the Ontario government's Task Force on the Primary Prevention of Cancer recognized that the accumulation of persistent toxins in our environment is related to the cancer epidemic. The Task Force went as far as to recommend the phase-out of organochlorines used and produced in the manufacturing of pesticides, certain plastics and the bleaching of paper.

However, key players in the "war on cancer" — particularly the American Cancer Society — are notably lax in mentioning the environmental component of the cancer epidemic.

Similarly, the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation has been remarkably silent concerning the link between environmental toxins and breast cancer. No environmentally oriented study has been funded by the organization in over two years. Also, the National Cancer Institute of Canada which distributes funds raised by the Canadian Cancer Society devoted a marginal 4 per cent of its budget in 1995-96 to research examining environmental impacts on cancer.

women educating women - a matter of survival

In response, activists have taken matters into their own hands by combating the incompetence of the medical establishment with education.

In that context, activist groups like BCAM are focusing their efforts on creating a knowledgeable community of women who can press for changes in increased research on the causes and prevention of breast cancer, and healthier diagnosis and treatment.

This year the group is involved in "Project Advocacy," an eight-month community awareness program funded by Health Canada, which has both leadership training and outreach components.

Diane Carr, another panelist from Victoria, B.C. was spurred into an activist role following her encounter with an ill-informed, uncaring medical establishment. Not only was it impossible to access any comprehensive epistemological data, but she also found her doctor unwilling to spare more than a few minutes to discuss her condition.

Carr also cited an occasional discriminatory attitude from the medical establishment towards older women, the idea being that "once you are above fifty you are going to die soon anyway." Sex is another obvious factor — as one of the women in the audience remarked, if this had been a disease that had affected men, "we would have seen desperate efforts to discover painless treatments and research on causes much earlier."

Now Carr explains, "I will be working for breast cancer until I get the anger out of my system." One of her projects with the Canadian Breast Cancer Network, and the Breast Cancer Information Project for B.C. and the Yukon, is the supply of information packages to women who are first diagnosed with cancer.

Carr was provided with encouragement and access to research findings by her friends, professional women and feminists, "who

GLENNA MCCONNELL SINGING IN SIGN LANGU

reast Cancer

nce in and outside the medical establishment

make it their business to know what is happening medically." In this manner, she was in a more privileged position than other women, including the other panelists. Even then, "it was only much later that I could understand what was happening to me, because even the available information was spotty at best."

shattering silence

The Canadian Cancer Society maintains that it is attempting to fill the gap of knowledge concerning breast cancer, by working in conjunction with the medical establishment to improve the existing situation.

In October of last year, it launched a nationwide Cancer Information Service which operates out of four cities. Trish King is Director of the Regina Call Centre in Toronto and acknowledges that most people are not aware of what is happening in terms of cancer research and treatment.

King claims though that "we know the word is getting out there through services such as this one." The service received 4606 calls in January alone from people interested in knowing about, "prevention and screening strategies, different types of breast cancer, treatments and side effects." In addition they are working to develop a Canadian Cancer Encyclopedia, a nationwide database on cancer incidence, and it is operational presently in the Vancouver Centre for all those who are interested in accessing it.

The Information service is limited, however, in the advice it can give for individual cases, since doctors are the only ones who have access to each woman's case history and personal diagnostic details. King concedes that it is up to the physicians and clinics to make a complementary effort. "We can only give the women the information and the confidence so that they can go back knowing what questions to ask their doctors."

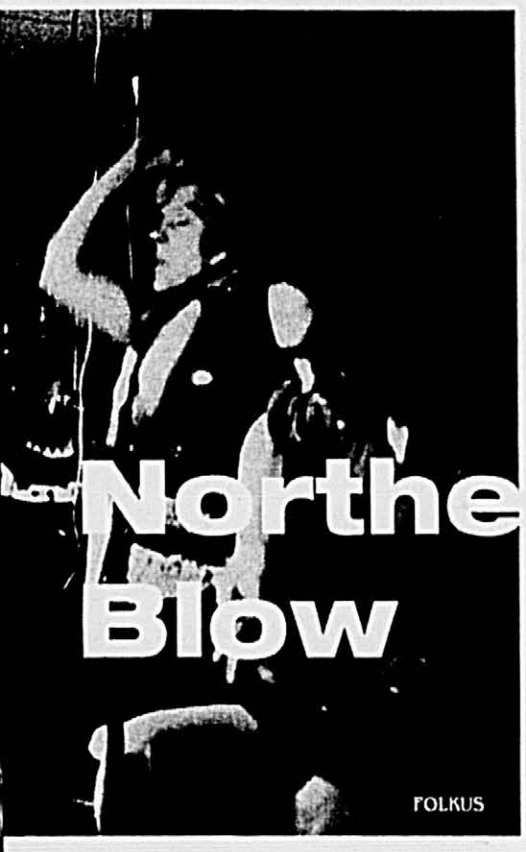
With regards to the dissemination of information, there are problems of reaching women outside urban centres, particularly women of colour.

These issues of accessibility are of particular concern to Iona Crawley of Timberlea, Nova Scotia. She was diagnosed with the disease 22 years ago and at the time she had no knowledge that any breast cancer support groups even existed.

Now she is working to provide improved medical facilities and support groups for Black women in her community because, as she says, "we usually suffer in silence." All women know how difficult it is to overcome the fear of going for a mammogram and it is "especially hard for the older women [in my community] who are not educated, and get intimidated by the doctors even before going."

As Crawley explains "we have no say in the therapy we receive and just do what the doctors tell us." One of the myths perpetuated by doctors is vehemently denied by Carr: "They are telling the women out there that no pain is associated with breast cancer. Well, don't believe them at all—they are not the ones who have felt it."

Carr agrees that this sharing of experiences signifies a way, "to bit by bit haul back what it means to be yourself after having gone through the whole medical experience."



Northern Winds Begin to Blow

Folkus uses sign language and folk music to get its soul across

by Chris Scott

For today's aspiring song artists, the chances of ever reaching that first, name-breaking success can seem treacherously remote. The multinational music industry, with its smug standards of 'sophistication', its obsession with contemporary 'relevance', its head offices often thousands of miles away and its reliance on flashy jet tours for a performer's promotion; all this can make it almost impossible for a new singer to get recognition without a combination of psychotic endurance, near-stellar talent, sex appeal and, most importantly, money, money and more money.

Against this backdrop, it is a real relief to encounter Folkus, a Chateauguay-based folk trio that played on Valentine's Day at McGill's Yellow Door. Clear-voiced and multi-talented (the show relied mainly on guitars, but switched emphasis to mandolins or drumming at special moments), the three performers exude none of the pretension associated with 'professional' musicianhood. All are parents (Cari Jones and Goran Petrovic are married) in their mid-thirties. Cari and Goran have a modest background in performance, but for lead singer Glenna McConnell, involvement with Folkus has offered the first chance of a wide audience for the songs and poems she has been creating enthusiastically since childhood.

Folkus has now been together for two years. Playing its own compositions at community coffee houses, it has kept an *insouciance* towards mega-success or the opinions of big-city managers. "We can afford not to be as aloof and as angst-ridden," Goran relates, referring to the fact that the group deals with intimate, familiar themes such as changes in nature, or devotion to the family.

Another benefit of this autonomy is Folkus' willingness to break convention, not just in the content, but in the medium of its presentation. Glenna learned sign language at a very young age to communicate with her deaf grandmother, and began to interpret her own songs for her at family gatherings. So it was natural that when she started performing publicly she kept this up, first to reach out to any deaf people who might be in the audience, but also to enrich hearing members' experience by illustrating "just how beautiful and expressive the language [sign] really is."

Friday's event was hosted in the delightful atmosphere of the Yellow Door basement amidst candlelight, low ceilings and tight, irregular rows of stacking chairs. Spectators waved and called out as late-coming friends trooped in; the performers were perched on a low stage barely a guitar's length from the knees of the front row of the audience.

The evening was led off with a short appearance by local guitarist Émile Goyette and Shawn Eliovitz, a McGill music student, on the conga. When Folkus came on, they drew quick attention through a particularly apt symbiosis of sound and words. To be sure, there were cases where the tune seemed more a repetition of generic country than something original, or where the lyrics became redundant in an effort to fit the scansion of the line (e.g. "calm and serene").

But these weaknesses were offset by several gifted renditions, such as *Northern Winds* (written by Glenna), whose swaying, rising melody, punctuated by Cari's staccato drumbeat, perfectly expressed the mixture of desolation and hope of approaching winter: "Just as the leaves warm the Earth below/ As Northern winds begin to blow/ We hold tight till a fire grows/ Warm enough to melt the coming snow." The best songs were those arranging different instruments in harmony or counterpoint instead of using three guitars to play the same notes. Hopefully this will be more frequent in subsequent performances.

While Glenna's signing had a lovely, slow, almost origamic quality which was partly understandable even for a non-signer, it unfortunately was used only in a few songs, and only in those written by Glenna herself. Several of Goran's creations featured brilliant one-liners which would surely have made pithy translation: "The smallest smashing atoms make the brightest burning suns," (from "Give them Something"), or "Let's get real stupid, and spend the night in jail," (from a zippy piece called "Coulter," about a small town in the U.S.).

Folkus will be releasing its first CD this coming May, and starting a low-key tour through Ontario, Québec and Vermont in June or July. I wish them luck. For despite the occasional stylistic imperfection, Folkus has a definite anarchic flair, a forthright, participatory art that is all too lacking in today's sanitized, commercial music environment.

The Yellow Door is located at 3625 Aylmer St. in the McGill Ghetto. Folkus has put out a demonstration tape, and can be reached at 692-5249 (Glenna)

Laser platters come to life

The scoop on the Enhanced CD format

by Mike Cullen

FROM HOLLY COLE'S ENHANCED CD *IT HAPPENED ONE NIGHT*

With computer audio players, popping a CD into my computer seems old hat these days. But I watched in fascination as an MTV-ready image of Wendy Lands strutted, lounged and pouted onscreen, complete with big hair and neon clothes.

It's an enhanced CD (or ECDs, as they're called), the latest extension to the audio CD format, containing a program that you can run on your computer. And though I'm no fan of Wendy Lands, the novelty of ECD's hasn't worn off yet.

FROM FIONA APPLES'S ENHANCED CD *TIDAL*

These CDs can still be used as normal audio CDs (don't worry), but the extra information that your computer can read through a CD-ROM drive gives it a little something extra. Combining picture stills, video images and sound, ECDs can include biographies, discographies, videos and interviews all in one package.

John Hardman, Creative Director of Caravan Studios, the authors of the enhanced portion of Holly Cole's live CD, says that "... music groups can use multimedia to create fuller, richer experiences for their fans. . . . Good multimedia can increase the sense of connection and intimacy between performer and audience beyond what is normally possible through traditional media."

'Great,' you say? But not all artists produce ECDs; in fact, only a handful of the thousands of CDs produced every year are in the ECD format. But if there's so much potential for getting fans more involved, why are so few artists exploiting this technology?

According to Harman, "The reaction of the artists is very mixed. Some are really into the new media, while others definitely shy away from it."

It seems that ECDs will have to pass through a necessary period of general apprehension before they become widely accepted in the music business.

How Enhanced CDs come to be

The idea for an ECD can come from different places and initiated in different ways. Hardman describes some of his experiences: "It [the project inception] happens in various ways. In the case of the Holly Cole ECD, we were approached by Holly's manager. . . . In another case, the record company approached us. . . . For one project, *we* approached the artist with the concept."

Since the format is still novel to the music industry, there are no written rules or procedures for proposing an ECD project. The kind of knowledge required to understand the production realities of ECDs also leaves much of the creative work to the production companies themselves — making the final product as much a reflection of the production team as it is of the artist.

However, the production of ECDs is still constrained by cost. On top of the regular costs of making an audio CD, the added enhanced portion can run from a few thousand dollars to larger budgets in the tens of thousands of dollars.

But once financing is assured, the technical aspects are all relatively standardized. Only the quality of images, video and size of the overall program varies.

The way it works is that one track on the CD, usually track zero, is encoded with the program containing all the images and sound recordings necessary for the multimedia program. The music is still the most important part of the ECD, so little is sacrificed there.

Of course, the limited capacity of CD-ROMs imposes important limitations on the breadth and quality of the enhanced portion of the CD.

John Hardman explains, "The things we can do with them are very limited by storage space and data rate considerations. A standard CD holds about 650 megabytes of information. Most of that is taken up by the standard audio tracks. This may leave something like 150 or 200 megabytes for the multimedia portion. Consequently, you [the company] spend most of your time figuring out how to squeeze your video into the available space and then how to feed it back to the user's computer at a data rate that a 2x CD-ROM player can handle and still have it look good."

Video and sound use lots of megabytes of storage on a CD, even if the video portion is in a compressed format. Consequently, the playback quality of videos will be a little blocky and jerky. Sound or visuals might be sacrificed for the other according to whatever the project demands most.

New CD ROM technology advances promise much larger formats that could potentially contain up to 17 gigabytes of data on a disc. That means a lot of the restrictions on the visual quality of multimedia products like ECD's will disappear. But until then, we'll have to settle for relatively small enhanced portions on artists' records.

What to expect

How can you tell a good ECD from a bad one? That's hard to answer, considering that the format is still new and its potential hasn't been reached. The consumer can expect a wide range of quality and features in the pool of ECDs currently available.

John Hardman says that the key feature for a reasonable ECD is good technical support from the multimedia company.

"I'm not surprised if there are some technical problems [with ECDs]," adds Hardman. "It's a new medium, and there are a lot of compatibility issues still being worked out."

The compatibility issue refers to the dual-platform support currently demanded on ECD's. Apple and PC support is usually built into each production rather than producing separate versions. Inevitably, there are certain problems in adapting the same multimedia format to each computer type.

However, Hardman still expresses that the experience that ECD's provide is most important.

"I expect it. . . to reveal something about the personality or vision of the artist beyond what I get from listening to the music. I want to get the feeling that the artist actually participated in creating this multimedia experience."

The degree that artists actually participate in these projects varies greatly, but the end result of a well-made ECD will make this lastdetail moot for most music fans.

Like any multi-use product, Hardman says, "A good enhanced CD is one that you want to play more than once."

You can reach Caravan at http://www.caravan.com.

An Enhanced CD Sampler

Blind Melon — *Nico*
Various Artists — *The Romeo & Juliet Soundtrack*
Holly Cole — *It Happened One Night*
The Barenaked Ladies — *Born on a Pirate Ship*
Wendy Lands — *Angels & Ordinary Men*
Fiona Apple — *Tidal*

...Off the Darkroom Floor

UNTITLED **by Miranda Ortiz**

A NEW CONSTITUTION FOR THE DAILY

Yes Committee

The Yes committee is composed of the Board of Directors of the DPS.

Why a new constitution?

The Board of Directors of the Daily Publications Society/ Société de Publication du Daily, publisher of The McGill Daily and Le McGill Daily français, would like to present you with a revamped and revised Constitution for the company.

The directors, the constitutional change committee and legal council have worked diligently to bring you a new constitution in order to answer the complaints about the one in force. These complaints have built in number and intensity over the years. The current constitution is said to be user unfriendly, hard to interpret and full of hard to understand legal jargon. We have tried to clarify, update and get rid of unworkable rules and procedures. We have replaced them with new and simpler ones in order to avoid misunderstandings and misinterpretations.

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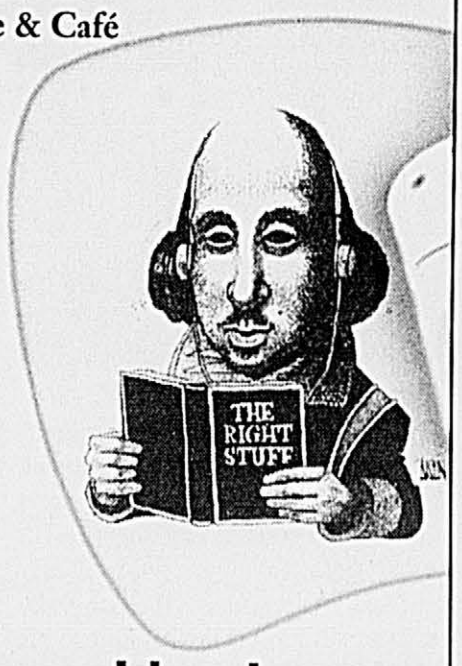

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SSMU Spring Elections and Referendum 1997

Poll Locations and Hours

Location	Tues. March 11	Wed. Mar 12	Thurs. Mar 13
Arts	10:00-4:00	10:30-4:30	10:30-3:30
Bronfman	10:00-5:00	10:30-5:30	10:00-5:00
BMH	11:30-2:30	11:30-2:30	11:30-2:30
	4:30-7:00	4:30-7:00	
Burnside	10:00-5:00	10:30 -5:30	10:00-5:00
Chancellor Day	10:00-5:00	10:30-5:30	Closed/Fermé
Leacock	10:00-5:00	10:30-5:30	10:00-5:00
McConnell Eng.	10:00-5:00	10:30-5:30	10:00-5:00
Redpath Library	10:00-5:00	10:30-8:00	10:00-5:00
RVC	11:30-2:30	11:30-2:30	11:30-2:30
	4:30-7:00	4:30-7:00	
Shatner	10:00-5:00	10:30-5:30	10:00-5:00
Stewart Biology	10:00-5:00	10:30-5:30	10:00-5:00

Advance Polls - Monday March 3, 10:00-4:00
Leacock, McConnell Engineering, Redpath Library & Shatner

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QPIRG

Annual General Meeting

The out-going Board of Directors will present audited financial statements for the last fiscal year and its report of the board.

It's an opportunity to find out what QPIRG is up to and where it is going...

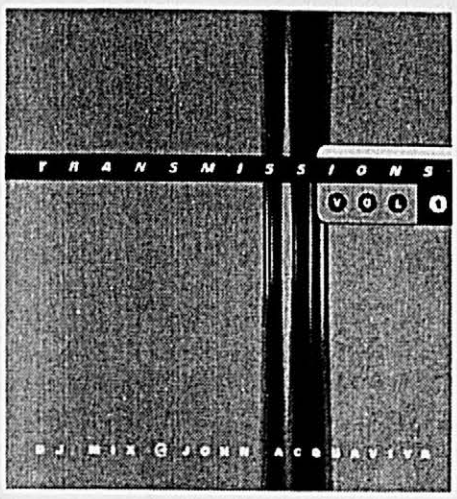
Wednesday, March 12, 1997
4:30pm, in Leacock room 232

The Quebec Public Interest research Group at McGill
3647 University, 3rd Floor, 398-7432

CD REVIEWS

John Acquaviva — *Transmissions vol.1*
Speedy J — *G-Spot*
(+8/Virgin)

These two discs herald the recent alliance between independent techno imprint +8 and major-label Virgin Music Canada. First up is *Transmissions*, a DJ mix CD by +8 co-owner John Acquaviva. DJ mixes are all the rage these days, and the best ones (Coldcut's *Journey's By DJ* springs to mind) succeed by obliterating stylistic boundaries and throwing hip-hop, techno, jungle and anything else that works into the mix.



Unfortunately, Acquaviva's entry into the arena is a dull 76 minutes of non-descript, minimal techno-house. None of the 17 tracks really stand out, which is fine, since non-DJs won't recognize any of the artists anyway (Omegaman? Tralopscinor?). The man's mixing skills are smooth, but that hardly redeems this long, decidedly unsexy mess of 4/4 rhythms and crashing high-hats.

Speedy J comes closer to delivering the goods as *G-Spot* features all of the ingredients of your garden variety techno longplayer: bleeps, analogue keyboards, trancey beats. "The Fun Equations" and "Oil Zone" rank with Speedy's best material, but the rest of this record is just mediocre. Incredibly, *G-Spot* initially came out in mid-1995, and has just been re-released with a free live album for those who didn't care for it the first time around. Those wondering why techno has lost a chunk of its fan-base to jungle and trip-hop need look no further than these two releases.

David Gogo — *Dine Under the Stars*
(Independent)

David Gogo, a short, pudgy, bald white guy in a bad green suit doesn't exactly fit your typical image of a blues musician. But apart from this initial impression, he has much in common with his musical predecessors, blues guitarists like John Lee Hooker, B.B. King and Stevie Ray Vaughn. Gogo's energetic act manages to stay true to the real roots of the blues, namely the electrified Chicago sound.

On a selection of mostly standards, Gogo offers a combination of raw tempo, highly-charged guitarwork with a bold keyboard sound. My personal favourite on the album is "I Feel So Good," a tune made famous by John Lee Hooker.

Here, the guitar work is direct and passionate, conveying a real understanding of boogie rhythms. Gogo follows the song with a long monologue about how a typical Saturday night for him and the band revolves around watching Don Cherry on *Hockey Night In Canada* and eating peyote.

Perhaps the album's best feature is its complete lack of pretension. In a music industry filled with market-driven, highly packaged images and sounds, it's nice to find music still being produced that is funny, defiantly overdub-free and has the guts to display the sartorially-challenged Gogo on its cover.

— Gil Shochat

Lorne Scodnick — My home away
(Independent)

This folk-based singer/song-writing iceman emerged from whatever suburban Montréal glacier dazed and disoriented, his last musical reference point being Lionel Ritchie and the Nylons. But those otherwise meritable species have since needlessly become extinct, victims of the mushheaded whims of capricious popular taste, leaving Lorne Scodnick severly misplaced.

Although lacking the market savvy to recognize the folly in sporting posed poloroids for album graphics, he is in fact of professional pedigree, gifted technically in all aspects of songmaking, but tragically stigmatized by a funk-purged sound without musicality or bottom end. Imagine Morrissey if he wasn't singing literature.

Without these tools, the album is wandering amidst a contemporary musical landscape dominated mostly by sex and other jungle rhythms, searching desperately for a friend willing to accept this tinny beach music as a beautiful freak. Someone exhibiting a level-headed appreciation of the Lional Ritchie aesthetic concurrent with enough alienation to incite a choice not wholly main or alternative.

Who would dare consume this strange fruit (arriving in person at Isart, February 20)? Only the most adventurous need attend.

— Mullein Buss

Lorne Scodnick plays Isart (263 St. Antoine W.) with the Paperboys and artist C.J. Taylor.

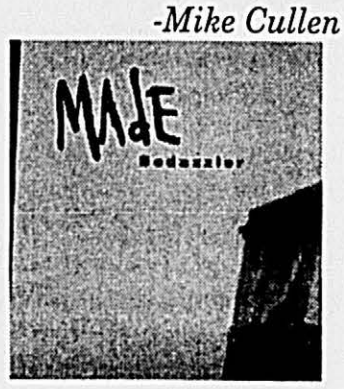
Made - *Bedazzler*
(MCA/Universal Music)

Bands play possum games these days; what looks like rock on the cover may be something else inside, and vice versa. Made is one of those dopplegangers — rock clothed in alternative dressing. Despite their slightly low-fidelity approach, Made is a dyed-in-the wool Toronto rock band that does little to break any moulds.

This doesn't mean that they're not listenable, however, as their material is otherwise passable. Vaccilating distortion gives a much needed edge to singer/guitarist Jason Taylor's lyrics, whose vocals sound remarkably like Robert Smith of the Cure. Hiding behind the guitars is some very non-descript bass and drumming — not awful, just not good enough to warrant attention. In fact, the best part of the album is the pink plastic of the CD case. Woo-hoo (with extra added sarcasm).

And then there's the oh-so-passé extra long track with a 10 minute space in between what could be two separate songs without the wait. Maybe if bands weren't so creatively bankrupt, the attempt at innovation would be in the music and not in the use of silence.

-Mike Cullen



The Daily Predicts...

"Of course, the technology is capable of spinning off new inventions to secure the attention of later generations. Cassette TV (buy and plug in your own programs) will be to TV what the record player was to the nickelodeon."

— "Television and the Market" by Todd 'Nostradamus' Gitlin, February 6, 1970

Happening

Not Cute Band Alert
Plumtree with the Inbreds, Veda Hille and PEZ at Jailhouse Rock, February 20 (tonight)

In response to the fact that all members of Plumtree were still adolescents when they released *Mass Teen Fainting* in 1995, an acquaintance of mine said, "Oh, like Silverchair."

"Au contraire, mon frère!"

Youth can be a damning thing for a musician; it tends to conjure up images of either Tiger Beat automatons, irony-free puddles of angst, or inept indie popsters. The general consensus is a lack of respect. Factor in that Plumtree are all women, and an often perpetuated music industry cliché emerges: young + women = cute. This has led to countless media references to "fake IDs" and "skipping school," as well as suspect comparisons to '60s girl groups and, in the words of one fellow journalist, "particularly Leslie Gore."

In fact, Plumtree carry little resemblance to the glossy melodrama of their supposed predecessors, except perhaps a certain half-winking self-awareness. Moreover, their debut, *Mass Teen Fainting*, betrays an inventiveness and sense of fun that is hardly formulaic. The result is an eminently likeable sound. Not to draw tenuous comparisons, but Plumtree wouldn't seem out of place sitting on a mix tape between early Cheap Trick and Talulah Gosh, with maybe a surf interlude or two.

Now that all members are finished high school (in fact, former bassist Nina is apparently a McGill student), being characterized as 'cute' is getting old, even if Plumtree did (with minimal shame) win a YTV Achievement Award last year. Their next release, (their difficult second album) — whenever that may be — threatens to be bigger than God. So, skip your must-see TV and have some fun tonight, or don't. The informed money says Plumtree *are* the next po-mo Shanghai.

— Kevin Siu

daily classifieds

Ads may be placed through the Daily Business Office, Room B-07, University Centre, 9h00-14h00. Deadline is 14h00, two working days prior to publication. McGill Students & Staff (with valid ID): $4.60 per day, 3 or more consecutive days, $4.05 per day. General Public: $5.75 per day, or $4.90 per day for 3 or more consecutive days. Extra charges may apply, prices include applicable GST (7%) or PST (6.5%). Full payment should accompany your advertising order and may be made in cash or by personal cheque (for amounts over $20 only). For more information, please visit our office or call 398-6790. WE CANNOT TAKE CLASSIFIED ADS OVER THE PHONE. PLEASE CHECK YOUR AD CAREFULLY WHEN IT APPEARS IN THE PAPER. The Daily assumes no financial responsibility for errors, or damages due to errors. Ad will re-appear free of charge upon request if information is incorrect due to our error. The Daily reserves the right not to print any classified ad.

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THE DAILY SINCE 1911

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AMDA is an equal opportunity institution

A NEW CONSTITUTION FOR THE DAILY

Yes Committee

The Yes committee is composed of the Board of Directors of the DPS.

Why a new constitution?

The Board of Directors of the Daily Publications Society/ Société de Publication du Daily, publisher of The McGill Daily and Le McGill Daily français, would like to present you with a revamped and revised Constitution for the company.

The directors, the constitutional change committee and legal council have worked diligently to bring you a new constitution in order to answer the complaints about the one in force. These complaints have built in number and intensity over the years. The current constitution is said to be user unfriendly, hard to interpret and full of hard to understand legal jargon. We have tried to clarify, update and get rid of unworkable rules and procedures. We have replaced them with new and simpler ones in order to avoid misunderstandings and misinterpretations.

Your VOTE is extremely important. Please exercise your right to VOTE.

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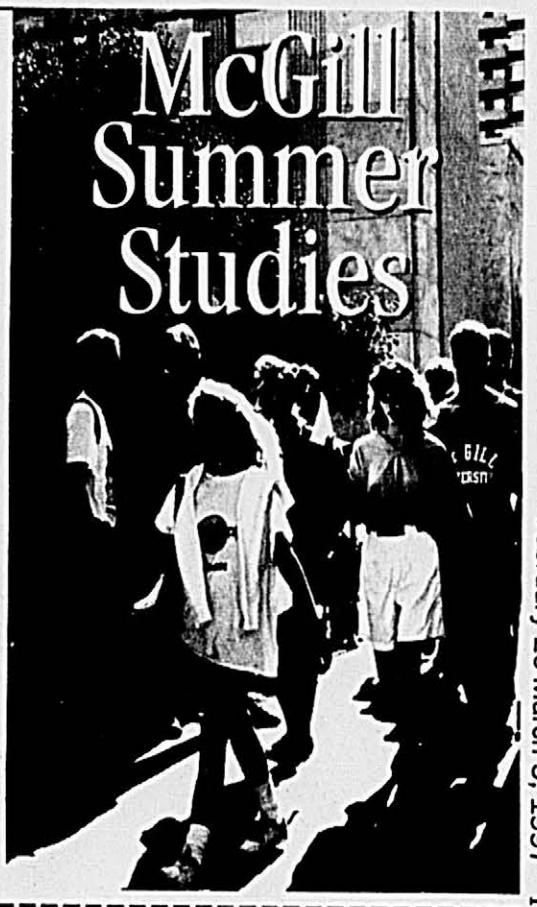

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Labatt ICE

pure chaos photo contest

You could win up to $2000 and have your photo used in a Labatt Ice campaign.

What is a "pure chaos" photo?

It's a photo of a situation, scene or object that is unusual, absurd, strange or far-fetched.

"Pure chaos" is everything bizarre that surrounds us. Anything that is absurd or anti-conformist, and therefore defies reason. It may shock, seduce, inspire reflection, even make us laugh, but above all, it must surprise and amaze us.

Selection criteria:		
	• "Pure chaos" sense	50%
	• Originality	30%
	• Overall quality of photo	10%
	• Good taste	10%

Computer-enhanced photomontages are excluded from the contest.

How to participate.

Fill out entry form. Put your photo, negative (very important) and entry form in an envelope marked *"Pure chaos photo contest"* and bring it to the university locale specified on the contest poster by March 21, 1997.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Tel: _____ Age: _____

University: _____

Faculty: _____

Participants must be 18 or over. The negative must be included with the photo or the photo will be discarded. First prize: $2000; second prize: $1000; third prize: $500; fourth prize: $500; and fifth prize: $500. Contest ends March 21, 1997. Contest rules are available at the university information centre as well as at PNMD Communication inc., 1610, rue Ste-Catherine Ouest, bureau 500, Montréal (Québec) H3H 2S2.

Labatt ICE

http://www.ice-pur-chaos.com